

# "Focus" on Vision Impairment & Blindness Conference 10<sup>th</sup> Annual

Meeting the Needs of Individuals with Intellectual Disability & Vision Loss

March 11, 2015 8:00 am - 3:30 pm

Four Points by Sheraton, Norwood, MA

#### **Keynote Speaker:**

#### Susan L. Connors M.D.

MGH and Mass General Hospital *for* Children Assistant Physician Pediatrics and Medicine Instructor in Medicine, Harvard Medical School

MGH Lurie Center, Lexington, Massachusetts

# "Seeing Autism Clearly"

#### **Awards at Lunch:**

Mark Holt "Gift of Lunch"

Paul McDade "Focus" Award for Distinguished Service

Paul McDade "Focus" Award for Distinguished Leadership

"Focus" on Talent!!!

Special Closing Performance by: "MAI Group Inc."



# A Very Special Thank You...

# **Lead Sponsor:**

### **Massachusetts Commission for the Blind**

# **Sponsors:**

Perkins Training Center
DDS Southeast Region Training Council
MAB Community Services

## **Friends:**

**New England College of Optometry Shriver Clinical Services** 

# Supporter:

**Eye Hopes** 

## **To Our Exhibitors Including:**

#### **Vendors:**

Ai Squared

The Carroll Center for the Blind

**Easter Seals Massachusetts** 

**Helen Keller National Center** 

**Massachusetts Commission for the Blind** 

**New England Consortium of Deafblind Projects (NEC)** 

**Perkins Library** 

**Perkins Products** 

**Perkins School for the Blind** 

**Perkins School for the Blind Educational Programs** 

**Talking Information Center** 

# A Very Special Thank You...

## **To Our Exhibitors Including:**

#### **Literature Table:**

Eye Care America
Hadley School for the Blind
Independent Living Aids
National Eye Institute
National Institute on Aging
Prevent Blindness America
And more...

## **Poster Displays:**

#### Disabilityinfo.org

Angelica Aguirre, Special Projects Coordinator INDFX

# Tools and Approaches Used at Perkins School for the Blind to Provide Educational Evaluations to Students with Visual Impairment and Intellectual Disability

Christopher Underwood, Director of Admissions and Evaluations Justine Carlone Rines, M.S., CCC-SLP, Evaluations Coordinator Perkins School for the Blind

# **Vision Box – Active Treatment for Individuals with Cortical Blindness**

Marion Hamilton, OTR/L Wrentham Development Center Visions of Independence SHARE Foundation

#### **Engaging through Light**

Catherine Rose, Senior Product Manager Philips

# **Poster Displays: (continued)**

#### **Reaching Goals Through Music**

Lisa A. El-Lakis, MT-BC/Music Therapist I Hogan Regional Center

#### **DPPC**

Jennifer Edwards-Hawkins
Disabled Persons Protection Commission

#### **Universal Access Program**

Gigi Ranno DCR

#### My Social Security Accounts at www.socialsecurity.gov

Kristen Alberino Social Security Administration

#### **APH Federal Quota Program**

MCB/DDS Partnership

# Providing Exceptional Eye Care to Children and Adults with Intellectual Disability

New England Eye Southeastern Massachusetts

#### **Homemade Adaptive Cane**

Bianca Fillion, M.Ed., COMS MAB Community Services

#### **Let's Walk Together**

Tony Miranda, Orientation & Mobility Assistant EDCO/WDC



# **Introducing our Keynote:**

# Susan Connors, M.D.

Susan Connors, M.D., received her B.S. in Medical Technology from Stonehill College University from the and M.D. Medical Massachusetts School. She subsequently completed a residency in internal medicine at Worcester Memorial Hospital. Dr. Connors started her career in Internal Medicine and Urgent Care, but when one of her children was diagnosed with autism, she focused on his care and In 2005 she returned to education. medical practice after her son entered a residential school.

From 1993 until 2003 Dr. Connors conducted an extensive literature review in autism and related fields, through which



she developed a hypothesis for an etiology of this group of disorders that involves abnormal regulation of signaling within cells during prenatal development. This work led to her position as an online research assistant at the Kennedy Krieger Institute in Baltimore.

Dr. Connors is committed to increasing understanding of autism spectrum disorders and frequently conducts educational presentations for parents, therapists and students, as well as for professionals caring for adult patients with autism. She helped develop a patient exercise about autism for medical students at Tufts University School of Medicine, and is involved in a continuing education conference in vision care for adults with developmental disabilities. She currently coordinates care for adolescents and adults at the MGH Lurie Center in Lexington MA and helps find services for transitioning youth with ASD.

Dr. Connors will be presenting the keynote "Seeing Autism Clearly" as well as a follow up session "Open Forum Autism Q & A".

# **Conference Agenda "At-a-Glance"**

8:00 - 8:25	Registration / Vendors Open / Refreshments		
8:25 - 8:30	Opening Remarks		
8:30 - 8:45	Welcome Remarks		
8:45 - 9:45	Keynote		
9:45 - 10:00	Break / Exhibits Open		
10:00 - 11:00	1 <sup>st</sup> Concurrent Session		
11:00 – 11:15	Break / Exhibits Open		
11:15 – 12:15	2 <sup>nd</sup> Concurrent Session		
12:15 – 12:30	Exhibits Open		
12:30 – 1:30	<ul><li>Lunch &amp; Award Presentations:</li><li>Mark Holt Gift of Lunch</li><li>Paul McDade "Focus" Awards for Distinguished Service and Leadership</li></ul>		
1:30 - 2:00	Dedicated Time for Exhibits Session		
2:00 - 3:00	3 <sup>rd</sup> Concurrent Session		
3:00 – 3:15	Break / Refreshments / Exhibits Open		
3:15 - 3:45	"Focus" On Talent!!! (Performance) / Raffle		

### **Directions!!!**

Four Points by Sheraton Norwood 1125 Boston-Providence Turnpike Route 1 (18 miles south of Boston) Norwood, MA 02062 Phone: 781-769-7900

www.fourpointsnorwood.com

Please see page 15 for a full listing of directions!!!!

We look forward to seeing you on March 11th!!!

# "Focus" on Vision Impairment & Blindness

8:00 – 8:25 Registration / Exhibits Open / Refreshments

8:30 – 8:45 **Welcome Remarks** 

8:45 – 9:45 **Keynote: Susan Connors, M.D.** 

Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) is a lifelong neurodevelopmental disability that differs in many ways from other conditions. Some of its unique qualities lead to difficulty that patients with ASD experience in accessing quality medical care from eye care professionals, dentists and primary care physicians. Certain medical conditions are more common in ASD than in the general population, and symptoms of ASD can themselves lead to delayed diagnosis of serious medical problems. Vision problems are also more common in children with autism, but similar data for adults with autism are unavailable.

Autism is a now recognized as a wide spectrum (ASD) with many known and unknown causes, and is diagnosed based on behavior, not blood tests or imaging studies. In 1990, 1 in 2000 children had an autism diagnosis, but the prevalence is increasing and 1 in 68 children were diagnosed with ASD in 2010. The majority, but not all, has intellectual disability and 40% will never learn to speak. In the US, 500,000 *children* with autism will become *adults* with autism in the next decade, and will need medical, vision and dental care.

Dr. Connors will discuss ASD from soup-to-nuts: factors in its prevalence, criteria for diagnosis, associated behaviors, sensory processing differences including visual symptoms, associated medical conditions, current research into some behaviors and their cause(s), treatments of ASD, and more. The presentation will be offered from the perspective of a medical professional working in the field of ASD who is also the parent of an adult with autism, intellectual disability and seizures.

9:45 - 10:00 Break / Exhibits Open

10:00 - 11:00 Concurrent Sessions

#### A. Diabetic Retinopathy:

Presenters: Nicole Siegel, M.D.

Assistant Professor of Ophthalmology

Boston University School of Medicine/Boston Medical Center

<u>Description</u>: In the United States, diabetes is the leading cause of blindness in the population aged 20 to 74 years and its prevalence continues to increase. The number of people with diabetic retinopathy is expected to significantly increase over the next 20 years. The medical and surgical treatment modalities for diabetic retinopathy continue to advance and improve outcomes for diabetic eye disease.

#### **10:00 – 11:00** Concurrent Sessions (continued)

# B. The Power of Observation - Relating Visual Function to Functional Ability and Performance of Visual Mediated Tasks.

<u>Presenter</u>: Nicole C. Ross, O.D., MSc Attending Optometrist

New England Eye Commonwealth & Perkins School f/t Blind

Assistant Professor of Optometry New England College of Optometry

Description: The term "visual impairment" is used to describe deficits of measured visual function for each eye, while the term "functional visual ability" is used to describe the functional limitations as a result of the visual impairment. The functional consequences of visual impairment are multifaceted, and maybe complicated by additional co-morbidities. Thus, a team-based approach is required. The role of the low vision optometrist is to identify possible medical interventions to reduce the level of visual impairment, and when this is not possible, to seek ways to improve functional ability by using any of the following: (1) appropriate visual equipment; (2) environmental modifications; assistive (3) other compensatory techniques or multi-sensory approaches. These three approaches listed above aim to reduce the functional demand of a given task to improve functional ability, and must be customized to the individual's needs. Appropriate follow-up and reinforcement by other professionals of the care team is then required.

This one hour presentation will present a series of patient cases describing the causes of visual impairment, the visual function measures conducted, as well as the patient's consequent functional ability. Recommendations for improving functional ability to meet the individual's goals are also discussed.



#### **10:00 – 11:00** Concurrent Sessions (continued)

#### C. "Why Should I Use a Cane and Become a Target?"

Presenters: Carole Wilson, COMS

Massachusetts Commission for the Blind, Springfield

Maureen Coyle, COMS

Carroll Center for the Blind & Shriver Clinical Services

<u>Description</u>: In years gone by, a white cane with a red tip was a sign to the passers-by that they should be aware not to impede the travel path of the person passing them on the sidewalk. Today, however, many of our individuals feel that symbol has been replaced with a neon sign on their back, making them an easy target for theft, violence and bullying. This session looks at traditional and new personal safety strategies, gadgets, role playing and the use of technology to develop safety awareness for your consumers and you. Please bring your ideas and experiences to share in our open discussion!

# D. "Who Says You Have to Eat with Your Eyes First?" A Multisensory Approach to Meal Planning with Individuals with Vision Impairment

Presenters: Susannah Locketti, Wellness Coordinator

Ginger Comeau, Residential Enrichment Manager

New England Village

<u>Description</u>: Learn how to engage individuals with visual impairment in all aspects of meal planning while invigorating their senses! This hands-on cooking demonstration will teach direct support professionals, paraprofessionals and residential managers how to use the senses of touch, sound, smell and taste to creatively plan a meal or cooking class for individuals with vision impairment. You will also learn adaptive approaches to safe meal prep as well as creative ways to engage adults with vision loss while shopping for and working with varied ingredients.

#### **E.** New Products and Services

Four different companies/organizations will demonstrate new technology and discuss services that are helpful to individuals with visual impairment and blindness and those who support them.

- AiSquared: ZoomText and Window-Eyes
- Perkins School for the Blind: eLearning
- Perkins Library: services, eligibility, and registration information
- Perkins Products: SMART Brailler, LightAide, and Prodigi

**PLEASE NOTE**: CEU's are **not** offered for this session.



#### 11:15 – 12:15 Concurrent Sessions

#### A. Open Forum Autism Q & A

<u>Presenter</u>: Susan L. Connors M.D.

MGH and Mass General Hospital *for* Children Assistant Physician Pediatrics and Medicine Instructor in Medicine Harvard Medical School

<u>Description</u>: What causes autism? (If we knew we'd be famous, but some ideas will be presented). Why are the numbers of patients with ASD increasing? How can we make eye care, dental and medical visits better for patients with ASD? If 40% of patients with ASD/ID will never learn to speak, how do they communicate? What do all those repetitive behaviors mean? How about recent research findings - what do they mean for patients?

...Then stay tuned for an open-forum Q&A about ASD!

# B. Day Program Environments for Individuals with Vision Impairment

<u>Presenters</u>: Meg Robertson, B.S., MS, COMS

Director, Orientation and Mobility Department

Massachusetts Commission for the Blind

Donna DiCorpo, M.Ed., COMS Orientation and Mobility Specialist

MCB/DDS Partnership Project

**Taunton Public Schools** 

Disability Commissioner-Taunton

<u>Description</u>: Research has shown that many individuals with cognitive impairments also have an undiagnosed vision impairment. This presentation will review different ways a day program can improve their building environment for individuals with known vision impairments and how these modifications can improve the site for all attendees. Adaptations for indoor and outdoor access will be discussed, which will enhance an environment allowing more independent access within the building as well as outside. This presentation will review why these modifications are beneficial to all, and how simple changes may enhance the environments for safer access for all.

#### 11:15 – 12:15 Concurrent Sessions (continued)

#### **C.** Positive Behavior Support

<u>Presenters</u>: Tiffaney Frongillo, M.S., BCBA Perkins School for the Blind

<u>Description</u>: Positive Behavior Support (PBS) is a term used to describe a set of evidence-based strategies that focus on prevention and proactive instructional approaches to enhance quality of life and reduce problem behavior. The design and implementation of such strategies can be challenging due to a host of variables (i.e. limited time and resources, competing responsibilities of teachers/caregivers, etc.). This presentation will cover the rationale and benefits of PBS and review critical components to program development and implementation. Applied examples of such PBS plans will be given and supported by brief student case studies.

#### D. Alternate Routes: Adapting Orientation and Mobility Techniques

<u>Presenters</u>: Janet Cason, M.Ed., COMS

(retired) – formerly Perkins School for the Blind

<u>Description</u>: This presentation will provide an overview of various orientation and mobility adaptations that have been adopted at Perkins for students who are having trouble learning standard O&M techniques. The adaptations described are appropriate for children and adults who have physical and/or intellectual disabilities in addition to their visual impairments. Some adaptations were the result of shaping an individual's poor technique into a safer form. For some individuals, the adaptation was a developmental step toward mastering the standard technique. We will describe how observations sometimes led to the best ideas as individuals developed strategies for maintaining, stability, support, or sensory input.

# E. Assistive Technology Solutions in Minutes - Ordinary Items, Extraordinary Solutions

<u>Presenter</u>: Therese Willkomm, Ph.D., ATP Clinical Associate Professor University of New Hampshire

<u>Description</u>: Thousands of assistive technology solutions can be created in five minutes or less using everyday tools and materials. This hands-on session will demonstrate an assortment of materials and techniques for creating assistive technology solutions for individuals who experience blindness, low vision or multiple disabilities.



#### 12:15 - 12:30 Exhibits Open

#### 12:30 - 1:30 Lunch & Award Presentations:

- Mark Holt "Gift of Lunch"
- Paul McDade "Focus" Award for Distinguished Service
- Paul McDade "Focus" Award for Distinguished Leadership

#### 1:30 - 2:00 Dedicated Vendor & Poster Session!!!

We listened to you!!! - We have again scheduled more time after lunch for meeting our Exhibitors, viewing the Posters and networking!!! Enjoy!!!

#### 2:00 – 3:00 Concurrent Sessions

#### A. Collaborating with Families in Developing Individual Service Plans for Individuals who are Deaf-Blind and/or with Multiple Disabilities

Presenter: Steve Perreault

New England Regional Representative

Helen Keller National Center

<u>Description</u>: This presentation will draw from personal experience and research to discuss common issues that may present as obstacles to family/professional collaboration in service planning. Session will elicit issues from session participants and provide suggestions to reduce obstacles and improve collaborative relationships.

#### B. Introduction to Basic Orientation and Mobility Techniques

Presenter: John Staren, COMS

Department of Developmental Services

<u>Description</u>: This one hour training is designed for the direct service worker in a day program or residence who works with individuals with legal blindness and is interested in the proper approach to helping the individual become more independent in their travel while maintaining their safety. Participants will be expected to simulate travel skills and techniques while wearing occluders (blindfolds). Limited to 30 participants.

#### 2:00 – 3:00 Concurrent Sessions (continued)

#### C. Focusing on Human and Civil Rights

Presenters: Tom Anzer, Director for Human Rights

Department of Developmental Services (DDS)

Teka Harris, Senior Human Rights Specialist

DDS Central/West Region

Rebecca Christie, Human Rights Specialist

**DDS Northeast Region** 

<u>Description</u>: This workshop will overview the human and civil rights of persons with intellectual disabilities and vision loss. This will cover the framework for the principles of due process in DDS, including how to think about potential limitations during medical exams, etc.; the right to accommodations and supports for safe expression of the right to self-determination through the lens of scheduling a vacation; and the day to day role of rights in the lives of those with intellectual disabilities and vision loss.

#### D. Technology for Leisure and Recreation

**Presenters:** Samuel Shaw

Coordinator of the Student Technology Center

Perkins School for the Blind

<u>Description</u>: We all know that technology changes the world we live in rapidly and that it is difficult to keep up. In our student technology center at Perkins, we focus on teaching a continuous process of learning, research and practice to support our larger goals of increasing students social and technology skills. We use fun after school and evening activities that reinforce creative outlets, communication and much of what they work on throughout the day. Out of this process and based on the interest of our students, we have developed many accessible leisure pursuits that the students have fully enveloped themselves in: Sound mixing club, Audiojacks, Radio Dramas, Podcasts, Radio shows, DJ Club, Open mic night, Tech/iPad club, Teen Hangout Socials, Computer Programming, iPad band & Theramini's, Google Glass and Touch Screen and switch-based activities.

#### 2:00 – 3:00 Concurrent Sessions (continued)



#### **E.** New Products and Services

Four different companies/organizations will demonstrate new technology and discuss services that are helpful to individuals with visual impairment and blindness and those who support them.

- AiSquared: ZoomText and Window-Eyes
- Perkins School for the Blind: eLearning
- Perkins Products: SMART Brailler, LightAide, and Prodigi
- DCR/Universal Access Program: sensory trails in various Massachusetts State Parks

**PLEASE NOTE**: CEU's are **not** offered for this session.

3:00 – 3:15 Break / Refreshments / Exhibits Open

3:15 - 3:30 "Focus" On Talent!!!

Performance by the **"MAI Group Inc."** will put the finishing touch on the day!

The MAI Group Inc. had been providing opportunities for people of various abilities in music and art since its inception in Oct. 2009. Some members of the group are amateurs while others are veteran musicians who have played and continue to play with other bands. The confidence level and skills of the members have dramatically improved as evidenced by their presentation in public as well as observations and feedback made by parents, support professionals and the general public. MAI is gaining respect and popularity and has played an average of at least 50 concerts over the past 5 years in more than a dozen towns. MAI will continue to educate people about the value of music and arts in people's lives, provide free entertainment, help build character, confidence, foster friendship and above all, have fun!

# 3:30 - 3:45 Closing Remarks/RAFFLE – Wonderful PRIZES!!! Must be present to WIN!!!

#### **Additional Copies of this Registration Brochure:**

Registration Brochure and Form can be downloaded from "Training and Events" section of the DDS Vision Loss website: **www.mass.gov/dds/visionloss** and from the "Perkins eLearning Schedule" on the Perkins website: **www.perkinselearning.org/events-monthly** 

### **Directions!!!**

### Four Points by Sheraton Norwood 1125 Boston-Providence Turnpike Route 1 (18 miles south of Boston) Norwood, MA 02062 Phone: 781-769-7900

www.fourpointsnorwood.com

#### From Boston and points North

Take I-93 South which turns into I-95 (Route 128) North.

Take Exit 15B, Route 1 South toward Norwood.

Travel 4.5 miles, the Four Points by Sheraton Norwood Hotel & Conference Center will be on your right after the Staples Plaza.

#### From the West

Follow Mass. Turnpike (I-90) East

Take Exit 14 onto I-95 (Route 128) South. (Note: From the West, this Exit is number 14, from the East, it is number 15.)

Continue South to Exit 15B. Route 1, Norwood,

And proceed as above.

#### From Providence, TF Green Airport & points South

Take I-95 North to Exit 11B, Neponset Street, Norwood.

Drive 7/10 of a mile and turn left onto Dean Street.

At traffic light, turn left onto Route 1, heading South.

The Four Points by Sheraton Norwood Hotel & Conference Center is on your right after the Staples Plaza.

#### From Logan Airport

Exit airport, follow signs through Williams tunnel (toll) to I-90 /I-93 South. Follow signs for I-93 South about 7 miles.

I-93 South turns into I-95 (Route 128) North.

Proceed on I-95(Route 128) North to Exit 15B, Route 1 Norwood.

Travel Route 1 South 4.5 miles to the Four Points by Sheraton Norwood Hotel & Conference Center, located on your right after the Staples Plaza.



We look forward to seeing you on March 11th!!

# **Registration Information**

- Please fill out the attached form and return BY February 26, 2015 to:
   Donnamaria Linfield / Shriver Clinical Services Corporation
   Wrentham Developmental Center, PO Box 144
   Wrentham, MA 02093
- 2. For questions regarding Registration, please contact Donnamaria: Donnamaria.Linfield@state.ma.us or phone 508-384-5679.
- 3. Please make check payable to: Shriver Clinical Services Corporation
- 4. Continuing Education Information:
  Application for 4 hours of Continuing Education has been submitted to:

Academy for Certification of Vision Rehab. & Education Prof. (**ACVREP**) Commission on Rehabilitation Counselor Certification (**CRC**)

An application has been made for 4 **CEC**s for Social Workers.

An application has been made to **MA Board of Registration in Nursing** for nursing continuing education.

Questions: EKing@state.ma.us

NECO/NEEI has applied for 4 hours of **COPE** approved credits.

Questions: Barry S. Kran, O.D.: Kranb@neco.edu

Perkins Training Center will award 5 Professional Development Points (PDPs)

Questions: Teresa.Pagliuca@Perkins.org

#### Please indicate your choice of CEU's on the registration form.

- 5. Scholarships are available for individuals with intellectual disability and their families. Information: Dianne.Rodrigues@state.ma.us
- 6. Reduced room rates of \$115.00 per night, exclusive of taxes, will be available at the Four Points by Sheraton, Norwood, phone: 781-769-7900. Please mention Shriver Clinical. Rooms at this rate are subject to availability.
- 7. Registration Brochure and Form can be downloaded from "Training and Events" section of DDS Vision Loss website: <a href="www.mass.gov/dds/visionloss">www.mass.gov/dds/visionloss</a> and from the "Perkins Training Center Schedule" on the Perkins website: <a href="www.perkinselearning.org/events-monthly">www.perkinselearning.org/events-monthly</a>
- 8. Questions please contact: Lisa.DiBonaventura@state.ma.us or 508-384-5539.

#### Please Register Early!!!

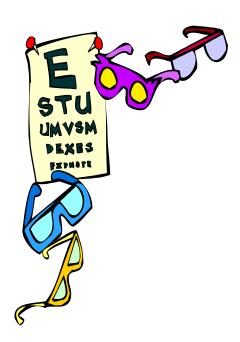
## **Registration Form**

Please return this form by February 26, 2015 Register Early if you can!

# "Focus" On Vision Impairment & Blindness Wednesday March 11, 2015, Four Points by Sheraton, Norwood, Massachusetts

Name:	,	, ,	
Agency Name:			
Address:			
Email:	Phone:		
Can we share your cont	act information with spo	nsors? Yes No	
<ul> <li>Lunch Choice: If no choice is indicated, the <u>Vegan</u> lunch will be ordered.</li> <li>Chicken with a mushroom trio topped by crème fraiche served with jasmine rice and asparagus with oven roasted plum tomatoes or</li> <li>* Roasted Acorn Squash with stir fry of snow peas, carrots, zucchini, mushrooms and corn atop jasmine rice (*Vegan and Gluten Free)</li> <li>Special Accommodations Needed*:</li> <li>* For Interpreting Services, please let us know by February 14, 2015</li> <li>Concurrent Session Selection: Circle the letter of the 3 you plan to attend.</li> </ul>			
	11:15 - 12:15		
	A B C D E		
	3 - 3	sting: COPE PDP	
General Admittance	General Admittance	Physician (MD, DO, OD)	
postmarked by 1/31/15:		1 11/51clair (1 15/ 50/ 65)	
\$50.00	\$60.00	\$110.00	
Check enclosed: yes	no/reason why	Amount:	
Please make check payable to: Shriver Clinical Services Corporation and			

mail along with this form to: Donnamaria Linfield / Shriver Clinical Services
Wrentham Developmental Center, PO Box 144, Wrentham, MA 02093



# Planning for the "Focus" Conference Your Notes:

**Please Register Early!!!** 

We look forward to seeing you on March 11th!!

## Please Remember....

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Can't wait to see you on March 11th!!

Lisa DiBonaventura, MA, COMS Statewide Director for Vision & Loss Services, DDS WDC, 131 Emerald Street, PO Box 144 Wrentham, MA 02093